Review Article

SOCIAL FORCES AND REGIME CHANGE
Beyond Class Analysis

By KILLIAN CLARKE*

Catherine Boone. 2014. *Property and Political Order in Africa: Land Rights and the Structure of Politics*. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 424 pp.
Dan Slater. 2010. *Ordering Power: Contentious Politics and Authoritarian Leviathans in Southeast Asia*. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, 346 pp.
Maya Tudor. 2013. *The Promise of Power: The Origins of Democracy in India and Autocracy in Pakistan*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 258 pp.

WHY do states democratize? Why do other states develop durable authoritarian regimes? And why do still others swing wildly between these poles, unable to settle at a stable political equilibrium? These foundational questions have motivated a rich tradition of research that seeks to explain regime formation and change as the product of conflict and struggle between social groups. The approach was first pioneered by Barrington Moore in his influential work, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, which centered its analysis on two linked questions: (1) what are the social origins of the cleavages that drive political conflict in a society? and (2) how do the struggles that take place between the groups defined by these cleavages shape the formation and transformation of political regimes?[1] Because the paradigm's core concern is with conflict between social groups whose members share common identities and interests, it is sometimes referred to as the social forces approach.[2] Historically, its practitioners have focused on regime trajectories in Europe and, to a lesser extent, Latin America.[3] In these contexts, where economic change and industrialization elevated ten-

* I thank three anonymous reviewers for comments and feedback on earlier versions of this article.
[1] Moore 1966.
[2] See for example, Bellin 2000 and Teorell 2010.
[3] See for example, Luebbert 1987; Luebbert 1991; Collier and Collier 1991; Rueschmeyer, Huber Stephens, and Stephens 1992; Bermeo 1997; Collier and Mahoney 1997; and Collier 1999.

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sions between groups defined according to different material circumstances, social classes were often the central players in the dramas of modern regime formation. These accounts therefore tended to privilege class conflict and highlighted the importance of key carrying classes, typically either the bourgeoisie or the working class, in explaining why some countries democratized while others did not.

How well does this paradigm travel to other parts of the world? Can it explain patterns of regime formation, change, and durability in the postcolonial states of Asia and Africa as successfully as it has in Europe and Latin America? Though in principle a paradigm centered on conflicts between social forces should be useful in virtually any context, the tendency to privilege social classes in the literature has arguably limited its applicability to certain regions. Class boundaries are poorly defined in parts of the global South, where many countries' economies have not undergone full industrialization.[4] And even where classes clearly do exist, they may not be the only, or even the primary, social forces involved in political conflict. Other social cleavages, including race, ethnicity, religion, sect, language, gender, clan, tribe, family, caste, region, or nation, may be equally or more politically resonant than class. Moreover, such ascriptive identities may intersect and overlap with class boundaries in complex ways, creating variegated social mappings, intersectional identities, and multiple potential axes of political conflict. In short, politics in these contexts is still driven by conflict between social forces, but the identities and interests of the social forces in question may be defined by cleavages that transcend or cut across class.

In this review essay, I discuss three recent works that collectively demonstrate how a pluralized version of the social forces approach, which takes seriously the potential for nonclass cleavages to shape political conflict, may be fruitfully deployed to explain regime trajectories in postcolonial states. Each work considers a different region: Dan Slater's *Ordering Power* analyzes the diverse regimes formed in seven Southeast Asian states following decolonization, Maya Tudor's *The Promise of Power* compares India's democratization to Pakistan's establishment of a weak authoritarian regime, and Catherine Boone's *Property and Political Order in Africa* examines the social origins of subnational conflict over land in nine African states. The works each draw explicitly on the social forces tradition, although they emphasize different parts of

[4] For example, scholars have recognized that countries with large informal economies, where capital ownership is poorly defined, mobility is high, and income sources are diverse and flexible, may not reflect the class hierarchies of traditional industrial economies. See Agarwala 2013; Basile 2013; Lee 2014; and Meagher 2010.

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Moore's original causal chain; Slater and Tudor concentrate primarily on how conflict shapes regime change, whereas Boone is more concerned with the social origins of those conflicts. They each also rely on the paradigm's primary methodological toolkit: process tracing and the comparative case study.[5] Most important, each work demonstrates in its own way the central role that social groups defined according to ethnic, national, regional, familial, and/or religious cleavages can play in shaping political change.

The point that nonclass collectivities may be central to processes of democratization and regime change is not entirely new. Indeed, Stein Rokkan pointed out as early as 1970 that religious and ethnic cleavages were at least as relevant to shaping Europe's political development as class differences.[6] Others more recently have suggested that scholars pay more attention to ethnic, religious, and communal groups when studying democratization.[7] But despite these occasional calls, it is striking how closely the social forces scholarship has hewn to a class-centric approach. Even classic works in non-Marxist traditions, such as Seymour Martin Lipset's modernization theory and Dankwart Rustow's "transitions to democracy" framework, often relied on explicit or implicit class variables.[8] And when scholars have occasionally applied a social forces lens to Asian or African cases, they have typically focused on class actors.[9] Of course, there is plenty of political science research on non-Western states in which social identities other than class figure prominently in the analysis. One need only glance at the voluminous work on ethnic conflict and civil war, patronage and clientelism, political economy, and state formation emerging from Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and Asia to note the centrality of nonclass identities and collectivities. But when it comes to the pursuit of social forces research in the style of Moore, with its attention to the structural origins of social cleavages and the impact of political conflict on regime change, class has remained the regnant lens of analysis.

[5] On the legacy and enduring relevance of this research tradition, see Slater and Ziblatt 2013.

[6] Rokkan 1970. Lipset and Rokkan similarly posit that the "hierarchy of cleavage base" in each European political system shaped the types of political alliances and party alignments that emerged. Lipset and Rokkan 1967, 6.

[7] Slater 2009; Capoccia and Ziblatt 2010; Bermeo and Yashar 2016.

[8] For example, in Rustow's argument, "well entrenched forces (typically social classes)" must first engage in prolonged social struggle for a transition to occur. And in Lipset's argument, the middle class is a crucial actor. Lipset 1960; Rustow 1970, 352.

[9] For example, both Bellin 2002 and Wood 2000 apply the paradigm to cases beyond Europe and Latin America, but focus almost entirely on class actors in their analyses. See also Anderson 1986; Snyder 1992; Heydemann 1999; Waldner 1999; Goodwin 2001; Sandbrook et al. 2007; and Winters 2011. Of course Moore also includes three non-Western cases: Japan, China, and India.

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It is for this reason that the works reviewed here offer such a refreshing new take on the social forces tradition, fruitfully extending it to analyze conflicts between other types of groups and demonstrating its potential to explain a range of new cases. Indeed, as Nancy Bermeo and Deborah Yashar point out in their call for a regional turn in democratization studies, the global South is replete with puzzling patterns of regime formation and development that demand scholarly explication.[10] Moreover, regime change in the South has increasingly taken a revolutionary form in which social forces mobilizing from below play an important role in deposing incumbent regimes.[11] A pluralized version of the social forces paradigm, in the style suggested by these works, may offer one way to make sense of these trends.

The discussion proceeds as follows. I first situate the social forces tradition within the broader scholarship on regime change and democratization, and review how its proponents have responded to a variety of critiques. I then critically evaluate the primary theoretical justification for privileging class in social forces research—an argument made most thoroughly by Dietrich Rueschmeyer, Evelyne Huber Stephens, and John D. Stephens in their book, *Capitalist Development and Democracy*.[12] Next, I demonstrate how each of the three books under review either theoretically or empirically calls this argument into question by showing how conflicts between nonclass social forces shape regimes in various postcolonial states in Africa and Asia. I then turn to further discussion of Boone's work, which, of the three, is most concerned with explaining the origins of the cleavages that shape political conflict—the crucial and often neglected first step in Moore's original causal pathway. I conclude with some thoughts on the implications of these extensions for the future of the social forces tradition and research on regime change in general.

I. The Social Forces Paradigm

The social forces paradigm is one of three major research traditions for studying the formation, transformation, and collapse of political regimes—those institutions that determine how and to what ends a society is governed.[13] The first tradition is the transitions paradigm, in which regime change occurs due to the strategic decisions, negotia-

[10] Bermeo and Yashar 2016.
[11] Beissinger 2016.
[12] Rueschmeyer, Huber Stephens, and Stephens 1992.
[13] For a more complete definition and conceptualization of political regimes, see Munck 1996.

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tions, and (mis)calculations of elite actors, typically political leaders.[14] Second, there are those who grant causal primacy to the underlying structural characteristics of a country's political economy, such as income distribution, wealth inequality, and asset mobility.[15] In this political economy school, democracy is often understood to be a concession granted to the masses by the rich, whose concerns about the redistributive effects of democracy wane as income inequality shrinks.[16]

The social forces tradition in many ways falls in between these two paradigms. On the one hand it is attentive to the structural underpinnings of social conflict, much in the manner of the political economy school,[17] but on the other hand, particularly in later formulations, it leaves room for conflict between social forces to take unexpected twists and turns. Moore's *Social Origins* spells out the key assumptions and tenets of this tradition. In that work, which focuses on regime trajectories in six countries (England, France, the United States, Japan, China, and India), Moore begins each case analysis with an examination of the "kinds of social structures and historical situations" that characterized each country's economy and society, and then traces how these structural patterns produce certain politically resonant social cleavages.[18] This leads him to consider how the conflicts between social forces defined according to these cleavages—nobility, bourgeoisie, and peasantry—determined the divergent regime outcomes in each case. There is a fundamental materialism to the work, in that most of the cleavages that he sees driving political conflict emerge from basic tensions and contradictions inherent in processes of commercialization and industrialization. Social conflicts occur between classes because those are the groups in society that share common material and, therefore, political interests in a modernizing world.

Several aspects of Moore's original theory came under criticism from later generations of social forces scholars, who revised and amended the paradigm in promising ways. But few of these works fundamentally questioned the materialism and class emphasis of the original approach. The first revision came from scholars such as Yashar, Eva Bellin,

[14] Rustow 1970; O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead 1986; Przeworski 1991; Linz and Stepan 1996; Przeworski et al. 2000.

[15] Haggard and Kauffman 1995; Haggard and Kauffman 2012; Boix 2003; Boix and Stokes 2003; Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Houle 2009; Ansell and Samuels 2010; Ansell and Samuels 2014.

[16] See especially Boix 2003 and Acemoglu and Robinson 2006.

[17] Indeed, Moore and his followers have influenced many scholars in the political economy school who have formalized and elaborated many of his original arguments, including the idea that democracy is less likely to emerge in landholding-peasant societies, where inequality tends to be higher. Many of these works also support Moore's thesis that a strong middle class is key to democratization.

[18] Moore 1966, 453.

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Elisabeth Wood, and James Mahoney, who point out that Moore and other early social forces scholarship was often overly structural, inferring interests, preferences, and behaviors too automatically from material conditions.[19] They argue that social forces scholars should instead pay more attention to contingency and agency in explaining why conflicts emerge and dissipate. For example, both Bellin and Wood suggest that class interests might be context-dependent rather than fixed, and Yashar argues that class actors can form coalitions that allow them to overcome structural constraints to action and to effect unexpected democratic breakthroughs. Through these theoretical interventions, this generation of scholarship pushed the social forces paradigm closer to the middle of the structure-agency spectrum.[20]

A second and, in some ways, related debate that has helped to reformulate and extend the social forces tradition concerns the relationship between political institutions, such as states and parties, and the social forces that undergird them. In Moore's original work, the state and other political institutions do not have independent causal agency; if they do appear in the narrative it is as instruments in the hands of dominant classes who use them to impose their interests on subordinate groups. Theda Skocpol critiqued this framing of the state in her 1973 review of Moore's text: "[T]he fatal shortcoming . . . about the role of the state is that nowhere is the possibility admitted that state organizations and elites might under certain circumstances act against the long-run economic interests of a dominant class."[21] More recently, a similar institutionalist argument has been made about how the social forces tradition treats political parties.[22] Like states, parties need not automatically represent the interests of their underlying class base, but rather might have their own political autonomy and identity, which at times leads them to act against the interests of their members (particularly when these members represent diverse social groups). The recognition that institutional actors might be important players in their own right in the drama of regime change has motivated a rich new wave of social forces scholarship that focuses on the role of parties.[23] Though much of this work examines Europe, Tudor's *The Promise of Power*, discussed further below, emphasizes the role of the Congress Party in In-

[19] Yashar 1997; Bellin 2002; Wood 2000; Mahoney 2001a.

[20] Mahoney 2001b and Keleman and Capoccia 2007 make similar calls for including more contingency and "conjuncturalism" in comparative historical research.

[21] Skocpol 1973, 18.

[22] Katz and Kolodny 1994; Capoccia and Ziblatt 2010; Tudor 2013; Bermeo and Yashar 2016.

[23] Capoccia 2005; Berman 2006; Ertman 2010; Hanson 2010; Ahmed 2013; Ziblatt 2017.

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dia and the Muslim League in Pakistan, and is thus a rare example of a work that takes a similar strategy in a non-Western context.[24]

The second generation of social forces scholarship therefore challenged and extended literature from the first generation in two related ways: (1) it called into question the strong structuralism of early theories and introduced more agency and contingency into the paradigm, and (2) it argued that states and parties could be important independent actors in shaping regime trajectories.[25] But these works still hew quite closely to the materialist orientations of Moore's original model. By and large, the central players in its narratives remain social classes (and now, sometimes, political parties as well).[26] Indeed, it sometimes seems as though there is an unspoken consensus transcending the literature that classes are simply the most sensible type of group to focus on when considering the conflicts that drive regime formation and change. What is the theoretical foundation behind this consensus? Rather than look for an explanation in Moore's writing, it is best to turn to another important work in the social forces tradition—Rueschmeyer, Huber Stephens, and Stephens' *Capitalist Development and Democracy*—which provides a theoretically grounded defense of privileging class actors over other social forces.[27]

II. Why Privilege Class?

Like Moore's *Social Origins* and other works in the social forces tradition, the primary concern of *Capitalist Development and Democracy* is explaining variation in regime outcomes across a diverse set of cases, specifically, the states in the advanced capitalist core of Europe and North America, as well as in Latin America and the Caribbean. The work is pioneering not only because it calls into question Moore's finding that the bourgeoisie is the primary democratizing class and posits instead that the working class is the key to explaining democratization, but also because it offers a full-throated theoretical argument in favor of class as "a master key to understanding the social structuring of in-

[24] See also Tudor 2013.

[25] These revisions are related in that, theoretically, to accept the second, one is required also to accept the first.

[26] The only exceptions are a small number of works focusing on European regime trajectories that recognize the importance of religious cleavages and highlight the important ways in which religious networks and institutions shape regime and party development. See for example, Gould 1999; Wittenberg 2006; and Ertman 2010. For a work that privileges ethnic cleavages, see Kopstein and Wittenberg 2010, who explain different regime outcomes in Eastern Europe as the result of cross-ethnic distributional conflicts.

[27] Rueschmeyer, Huber Stephens, and Stephens 1992.

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terests and power in society."[28] The authors devote a full chapter to unpacking and defending this claim.[29] They argue that classes are central to regime change because they are, uniquely, the "historical actors that are grounded in the structures of antagonistic socioeconomic interests and their change."[30] In this sense, they make an argument in favor of class that is quite similar to Moore's. But unlike Moore, they wrestle directly with two theoretical problems that plague class-centric analysis: a *boundary* problem and a *resonance* problem.

First, invoking class in political analysis requires one to assume that classes are homogenous and discrete social objects, and that these objects are easily identifiable both to external observers and to their own members (a boundary problem). Second, it assumes that these groups constitute the most politically resonant form of social identity, that they determine their members' preferences and interests regarding politics, and that they form the basis for collective political action (a resonance problem). In resolving the boundary problem, Rueschmeyer, Huber Stephens, and Stephens introduce two forms of closure that define the objective boundaries of a social class: mobility closure and interaction closure. Mobility closure means that members of a social class cannot easily move socially beyond their class boundaries, and interaction closure means that social interactions are largely confined within these boundaries. To resolve the resonance problem—that is, that those who fall within class boundaries may not necessarily feel strongly about their position—these authors suggest that classes have not only an objective dimension, but also a subjective one. They write:

> This objective conception of class must be complemented by an analysis of the subjective mentality, ideas, and dispositions found among members of a class and, equally important, by an analysis of the conditions of collective organization and action on the basis of class position. Neither class consciousness nor class organization and collective action follow with any simple necessity from class position.[31]

In resolving the resonance problem, the scholars thus propose a strong constructivist theory of class identity. Even when classes have clear objective borders, those who fall within those borders may lack the class consciousness necessary to engage in concerted collective action.

The notion that classes have both an objective and subjective dimension is at least as old as the well-known distinction between a "class in itself" and a "class for itself." It also has roots in Max Weber's theori-

[28] Rueschmeyer, Huber Stephens, and Stephens 1992, 5.
[29] Rueschmeyer, Huber Stephens, and Stephens 1992, 40–78.
[30] Rueschmeyer, Huber Stephens, and Stephens 1992, 51.
[31] Rueschmeyer, Huber Stephens, and Stephens 1992, 53.

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zations of class, in which he distinguishes between a class, objectively defined by a shared economic situation, and a status group, defined by shared and mutually recognized cultural attitudes, mores, and lifestyles.[32] In other words, it is not an especially bold or controversial claim, particularly for recent social forces scholars who generally embrace a less deterministic and more flexible understanding of class identity and interests, as discussed above.[33] The problem is that the essential constructivism in this conceptualization of class directly undermines the case for privileging class over other types of social identity. Indeed, if class identities are historically and socially constructed, and if these construction processes are critical to allowing classes to articulate collective interests and engage in collective action, then surely politically resonant cleavages based on other identities can emerge in similar ways, potentially complicating the emergence of "class for itself."

It is noteworthy that in another of his writings, Weber identifies the very same tension between objective and subjective dimensions of identity in the challenge of conceptualizing ethnicity.[34] He recognizes that like class identity, ethnic identity must also be constructed. In fact, just as there has been a long-running theoretical debate in scholarship on class analysis regarding the objective versus subjective dimensions of class, so too have scholars of ethnic politics debated the merits of primordialist versus constructivist conceptualizations of ethnicity, with recent works lining up broadly behind a constructivist consensus.[35] Both scholarly traditions, therefore, seem to agree that regardless of the type of group in question, "groupness" does not ever arise automatically. It must be built, often deliberately, and often for overtly political reasons.[36]

[32] Weber 1947. Ziblatt 2013 argues that Moore also incorporates elements of Weber's notion of status into his conceptualization of class groups.

[33] In earlier Marxist literature, scholars argued that class could structure political conflict even without strong class consciousness by distributing resources, and therefore power, unevenly among different social groups. In other words, they would have disagreed with Rueschmeyer, Huber Stephens, and Stephens 1992 that a subjective dimension to class is necessary to make it a relevant social identity for politics. Moore himself at times writes in this mode, though at other times he seems to adopt a more constructivist understanding of class. Most of the social forces scholarship since *Capitalist Development and Democracy* either explicitly or implicitly embraces a version of Rueschmeyer, Huber Stephens, and Stephens' constructivism—in fact, as discussed above, much of it directly critiques the structuralism of early theories.

[34] Weber writes, "[T]he belief in group affinity, regardless of whether it has any objective foundation, can have important consequences especially for the formation of a political community. We shall call 'ethnic groups' those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common dissent." Weber 1922 [2013], 389.

[35] For overviews of these debates, see Hutchinson and Smith 1996 and Chandra 2012.

[36] Bourdieu 1989 similarly argues that solidary groups of various types (class and nonclass) must be deliberately constructed through the "political work" of entrepreneurs (p. 17). See also Brubaker 2002 for further discussion of "the group" as an analytical concept, and the potential similarities between processes of constructing class and ethnic "groupness"; and Tilly 2004 for a discussion of mechanisms that may form, transform, and activate social boundaries, broadly defined.

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In sum, it seems difficult to sustain simultaneously a constructivist understanding of class and a theoretical adherence to class as the universally relevant social cleavage for social forces research. If class identities and interests are historically constructed, then certainly nonclass identities may plausibly be mobilized to form powerful and consequential social groups. Indeed, societies are often riven by multiple cross-cutting and overlapping cleavages, and processes of social construction in interaction with social and historical change may be the key to understanding which of these cleavages come to be politically resonant. Given an individual's putative membership in multiple groups, there is no a priori way of telling which of these groups she may feel closer to or, more important, which of them she may see as representing her political interests. Of course, this is not to say that scholars should never pay attention to class—far from it. It is simply to rebut the stronger claim that class cleavages everywhere and always are the "master key" to understanding conflict and its effects on regime change.

III. Social Forces in Postcolonial Asia and Africa

When scholars study regime change in postcolonial cases beyond Europe and the Americas, they mostly draw on frameworks and approaches other than the social forces paradigm.[37] For example, some highlight the importance of institutional legacies of state formation and the role of state capacity in authoritarian breakdown.[38] Others, also writing in an institutionalist vein, propose that authoritarian institutions, such as hegemonic parties and undemocratic elections, have contributed to the longevity and robustness of authoritarian regimes.[39] Two other popular explanations for variation in regime outcomes in Asia and Africa center on legacies of colonialism[40] and natural resource endowments (the resource curse).[41] In addition, some scholars simply include Asian and

[37] It is important to distinguish between the social forces paradigm discussed in this article and the related, though distinct, research tradition of studying social forces in their relationship to states. This "state in society" framework, originally pioneered by Joel Migdal, has often analyzed Asian and African cases; in fact, the theory was originally motivated by the puzzle of persistently weak states in the global periphery. This paradigm shares some characteristics with the social forces tradition in regime change studies, including its attention to autonomous forces in society and to political conflict. But its core concern is with the contests between state and society over who may exert social control, the drivers of weak state capacity in the global periphery, and the developmental effects of weak states. It typically does not consider the question of regime formation and transformation. For early work in this vein, see Migdal 1988; Migdal 2001; Migdal, Kohli, and Shue 1994. For several recent important reformulations, see Teichman 2012 and Centeno, Kohli, and Yashar 2017.

[38] Bunce 1999; Bratton and Chang 2006; Pepinsky 2009.

[39] Lust-Okar 2005; Brownlee 2007; Gandhi and Przeworski 2007; Magaloni 2008; Blaydes 2011; Levitsky and Way 2010.

[40] Bernhard, Reenock, and Nordstrom 2004; Woodberry 2012.

[41] Ross 2001.

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African countries as case studies to support large-*n* analyses seeking to identify common patterns across multiple waves of democratization.[42]

There is also, of course, a rich literature on ethnic politics, much of which has emerged from research on non-Western cases. But these works tend to focus on a different set of questions than those that animate the social forces tradition—for example, why elites distribute resources to coethnics, why voting often happens along ethnic lines, and how and why ethnic violence and civil war erupts. When they do consider regime outcomes, they often use large-*n* statistical analyses and rarely draw from the social forces tradition.[43] As a result, little of what makes the social forces paradigm such a powerful tool of political analysis—specifically, its attention to the connections between social structure and political conflict and the subsequent effects of that conflict on regime trajectories—has been brought to bear on the puzzlingly divergent cases of Africa and Asia. This is why the books under review in this article represent such original contributions.

Ethnic, Regional, and Class Mobilization in Southeast Asia

Of the three works, Slater's *Ordering Power* is perhaps the most explicit in its ambition to extend the social forces paradigm beyond class analysis. Slater's core concern is explaining the pattern of diverse regime outcomes in Southeast Asia, a region that he notes resembles Europe in how widely its members' regimes have diverged despite a range of common characteristics and shared historical experiences.[44] Slater seeks to understand why seven distinct Southeast Asian states have experienced three different regime trajectories: durable authoritarian domination in Malaysia and Singapore; regime fragmentation in the Philippines, South Vietnam, and Thailand; and militarization in Burma and Indonesia.[45] Slater's explanation for these divergent pathways centers on the critical juncture following World War II when Japan withdrew from

[42] Haggard and Kauffman 1995; Teorell 2010.

[43] Examples of works in the ethnic politics literature that consider regime outcomes and trajectories include Rabushka and Shepsle 1972; Lijphart 1977; Horowitz 1993; Welsh 1993; and Merkel and Weiffen 2012. The consensus in this field is that countries with fewer ethnic cleavages tend to have better prospects for democracy, but Brooks and Fish 2004 and Beissinger 2008 raise questions about this finding.

[44] Kuhonta, Slater, and Vu 2008 make a similar argument.

[45] These types are based on Slater's contention that a variety of regime characteristics typically analyzed independently—state capacity, party strength, military cohesion, and authoritarian durability—are actually integrally related, and therefore ought to be considered comprehensively. The durable authoritarian regimes of Malaysia and Singapore, for example, have strong state capacity, a well-integrated and high-functioning party, and a cohesive military establishment, all of which can be explained by the same set of causes.

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Southeast Asia and triggered a decade of tumultuous political upheaval. The contours of that upheaval, specifically the nature and degree of contentious politics, shaped the way elites in each case came together to form coalitions, which in turn explains the heterogeneity in regime outcomes. Where state officials, business elites, members of the middle class, and communal leaders faced threatening and endemic challenges from below, they banded together in what Slater calls "protection pacts," which formed the basis for the strong institutions that supported long-term authoritarian durability. Where these challenges were perceived to be less threatening or less enduring, elite cohesion was weaker, and regimes ended up with poorly consolidated authoritarian institutions.

What makes contentious politics more or less threatening to elites? In answering this question Slater makes one of his most novel theoretical interventions. He argues that levels of elite fear and cohesion were determined by the types of social cleavages that structured popular resistance. In Malaysia and Singapore, the two cases of strong authoritarianism, ethnic and class lines overlapped. Radical leftist mobilization by ethnic Chinese workers led to a decade of insurgency and urban race riots that traumatized these two countries' ethnic Malay elites, who banded together to form strong and highly centralized authoritarian regimes. In the Philippines, South Vietnam, and Thailand, however, leftist mobilization occurred solely along class lines and led to far less cohesion among ruling elites. Finally, in Indonesia and Burma, the primary axis along which mobilization emerged was regional rather than class-based or ethnic. As armed movements in these countries' peripheral regions sought to exit the state, they prompted a strong military response, which helped to consolidate military institutions, but left the rest of these regimes more fragmented.

In short, Slater shows that whether popular social forces were mobilized along class, class-ethnic, or regional lines had a decisive impact on regime outcomes in Southeast Asia. He points out that these findings have important theoretical implications for social forces scholarship, which he believes has focused unduly on class groups.

> The structuralist literature on democratic transitions has problematically conflated social forces with social classes and overstated the importance of economic factors in driving democratic protest. We might better understand recent "democratic revolutions" by paying closer attention to communal elites, and the emotive appeals to shared nationalist and religious identifications they use to mobilize cross-class coalitions against authoritarian incumbents. (pp. 28–9)

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Slater also notes that his work maintains much of the inherent structuralism of the social forces tradition, belying arguments that structural analysis must necessarily focus on groups defined by socioeconomic cleavages. He highlights the critical importance of long-standing and highly resonant preexisting ethnic cleavages to explain why conflict took such explosive forms in Singapore and Malaysia, and contrasts these deep cleavages to poorly defined and weakly politicized ethnic divisions in his other cases. Similarly, he argues that better recognition of nonclass identities is a move that is squarely in accordance with the literature's recent shift to a more agency-based and coalitional line of thinking in which regime transitions are brought about by cross-class alliances. He writes, "Class itself cannot logically explain the kind of *cross*-class coalition that seems so important in securing democratic change" (p. 46). Rather, some other form of identification may be the glue necessary to hold together cross-class coalitions.[46] Indeed, several second-generation social forces scholars stress the role of nonclass identities in bringing together disparate class groups. For example, Yashar highlights the importance of the church in cementing democratic coalitions in Costa Rica, and Wood's work demonstrates the importance of race in maintaining the cohesion of the popular coalition that ended apartheid in South Africa.[47]

Religion, Cross-Class Coalitions, and Political Parties in India and Pakistan

The role of nonclass identities in cementing cross-class coalitions is also important in Tudor's explanation of why India developed a stable democracy while Pakistan has suffered decades of unstable authoritarian governments. In *The Promise of Power*, she argues that the type of class coalition and level of institutional strength behind each country's founding political party explains the divergence. In India, the Congress Party was built by a multiethnic coalition of middle-class elites in alliance with small rural landholders, and the coherence of these groups' class interests facilitated the emergence of a strong party espousing an inclusive and programmatic nationalist ideology. In contrast, Pakistan's Muslim League was based on a coalition of strange bedfellows: aris-

[46] Of course, this need not necessarily be the case, and there are many examples of cross-class alliances that are bound together primarily by mutual material interests. For example, populist coalitions in Latin America often comprised labor and business groups with shared interest in raising wages and expanding markets. Nonclass identities can help to cement cross-class coalitions, but they are not a necessary condition. I thank an anonymous reviewer for raising this important point.

[47] Yashar 1997, 84–6; Wood 2000, 111–42.

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tocratic Punjabi landholders and Bengali peasants. Despite having no material or redistributive interests in common, these groups came together over their shared identity as Muslims and their perceived marginalization by the increasingly Hindu-oriented and -dominated Congress Party. They joined forces to push for an independent Muslim Pakistani nation, and in so doing formed a coalition of convenience that held until the point of independence. But because the material interests of these groups were so opposed—Bengali peasants demanded economic redistribution programs that would have undermined the Punjabi aristocrats' wealth and power—the coalition fell apart shortly after independence, leaving Pakistan with the Muslim League, a poorly institutionalized and weak ruling party espousing a vague and incoherent form of religious nationalism. It did not take long for this founding party to be pushed aside in a military coup.

Conceptualizing political parties as independent actors with their own agency and influence over political change is one of the central theoretical contributions of Tudor's work. She seeks to bring together two of the classic scholars on political development, Moore and Samuel Huntington, through an argument that incorporates both the role of social classes and political institutions.[48] She writes, "A narrow focus on the economic interests of major social actors does not adequately reflect the ways in which existing political institutions themselves impact and structure political preferences" (p. 20). She also argues that strong founding parties may be able to develop compelling and inclusive nationalist ideologies capable of transcending other potentially destabilizing social cleavages. In this way, Tudor lends important credibility from a pair of non-European cases to the revisionist efforts noted above that seek to grant more autonomy and agency to political institutions like parties in theories of regime change.

Tudor's theoretical goals are therefore distinct from Slater's, who explicitly seeks to introduce nonclass social forces into his argument. Although like him, she is interested in demonstrating that the social forces paradigm can "generate compelling explanations of regime outcomes in postcolonial, developing country cases," her proposed revision centers more on the importance of institutions and their ability to develop ideologies that overcome social divisions (p. 17). Though nonclass identities do seem important for cementing the cross-class coalitions she analyzes, theoretically she follows her predecessors in the social forces tradition and argues that class groups are the most important for explaining regime divergence in her cases. On this point, she writes:

[48] Moore 1966; Huntington 1968.

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> This study suggests that classes, as opposed to status groups, are more likely to influence political outcomes when a society is undergoing major economic changes, as was typical of colonial societies. Class tends to become a more important determinant of political action in a society undergoing big economic changes because changes in the economic structure of society—typically toward greater industrialization, urbanization, and international integration—are often accompanied by changes in social structure and in political institutions that had heretofore reflected the status quo. (p. 11)

In this sense, the argument aligns with Rueschmeyer and colleagues' claim that socioeconomic change is likely to accentuate and politicize divisions between social groups structured along the lines of shared material interests. But Tudor runs into the same tension between the objective and subjective bases of class that these scholars do. She claims to appreciate the constructed nature of class, but then assumes that class identity will motivate political action more consistently and powerfully than other potentially countervailing forms of identity.[49]

Another rebuttal to Tudor's argument, which draws on points made in Slater's work, is that periods of anticolonial struggle and independence often entail seismic noneconomic changes in social structures. The primary political forces that emerge following these moments of rupture may well be defined by ascriptive identities and nonmaterial collective interests. It was common for European powers to govern using divide-and-rule strategies that structured colonial societies along a variety of class and nonclass lines.[50] When colonial powers withdrew, these social cleavages often took on explosive political resonance. In India, for example, the British forged a close alliance with Muslim landholders in the United Provinces. As Muslims began to understand that Britain's days in India were numbered, they developed an acute sense of political threat, which motivated their efforts to broaden the base of their party. In Southeast Asia, the withdrawal of Japan after World War II catalyzed a decade of social conflict that occurred along lines of difference that had been ingrained and institutionalized during the previous decades of European colonial rule. Seen in this context, processes

[49] Following the constructivist conceptualization of class forwarded by her predecessors, Tudor claims to adopt a "Weberian understanding of class because it does not presume a relationship between a given class situation and either the consciousness of that situation or subsequent political organization on the basis of class interests. In the cases discussed below, action on the basis of shared class and status positions depended on first perceiving a causal basis for class positions. The argument developed below does not presume a relationship between a given class situation or status grouping and the subsequent formation of a political organization to pursue class interests" (p. 10). She does not explicitly discuss the tension between this understanding of class and the claim quoted above, i.e., that class will automatically emerge as the most important form of social identity during periods of economic change.

[50] Laitin 1986; Posner 2005.

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of decolonization and national independence can bring about "changes in social structure and in political institutions" that are no less profound and explosive than the changes wrought by processes of industrialization and urbanization.

Interestingly, some of Tudor's empirical analysis bears out this argument, as she discusses the central role of religion and its interaction with class in structuring the two different founding coalitions. Tudor explains how in the nineteenth century the religious reforms movement in India "translated into limited Muslim membership within Congress" and "the image of Congress as a Hindu movement" (p. 51). These early divisions came to be accentuated in the late nineteenth century as democratic reforms diminished the power of Muslim landlords in the United Provinces who sought protection by allying themselves with the British colonists. In 1906 they formed the antidemocratic Muslim League to protect themselves against democratizing forces that they perceived would undermine their interests as both landlords and Muslims. Communal divisions between Hindus and Muslims continued to gain political resonance during the early twentieth century. Tudor writes, "Tension between Hindus and Muslims . . . grew and assumed wider political resonance during the course of political reforms at the beginning of the twentieth century in areas where Hindus and Muslims were in close competition for employment" (p. 89).

Through the first half of the twentieth century, the Muslim League continued to claim that it represented the interests of India's Muslim minority. But this claim was undermined by its dismal performance in the 1937 elections, when it failed to garner significant votes even in the Muslim majority provinces of Bengal and Punjab. At that point, Muslim League leaders in the United Provinces saw clearly that a postindependence India run by Congress would present serious threats to their status and power. Though Tudor claims the group's embrace of Muslim identity was an instrumental cover for what were in fact material concerns, the group does seem to have had genuine communal grievances. For example, Muslims traditionally enjoyed political overrepresentation under British rule, a privilege that the Congress Party hoped to revoke. Congress also implemented policies that eventually thinned the ranks of Muslims in the upper echelons of government services, for example, by using the Devanagari script associated with Hindi (as opposed to the Arabic script used in Urdu) as the medium for English-school education (p. 124–29). And indeed, the Muslim League comprised not only landholders but also middle-class Muslims, suggesting a deeper set of

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shared interests. In fact, the Muslim League serves as a good example of how ascriptively defined groups may hold collective interests that are just as powerful as the materially defined interests of class groups.

Shortly after the 1937 elections, the Muslim League began cobbling together what Tudor calls "a coalition of convenience" that included aristocratic landholders and Muslim religious leaders in Punjab along with a populist grassroots movement of students and peasants in Bengal.[51] The only factors uniting these disparate groups were their shared identification as Muslims and their shared interests in resisting their loss of privileges under the British. In contrast, the middle-class leaders of the Congress Party were able to build a far more coherent cross-class coalition, allying primarily with India's rural lower middle class and with whom they had much in common. The Congress Party also developed an inclusive and programmatic nationalist ideology that allowed it to downplay and depoliticize other potentially relevant lines of difference in India, including those dividing regions, linguistic groups, and castes. The combination of its inclusive, nonsectarian version of nationalism and its coherent distributive coalition gave it a stable base on which to build a postcolonial democratic nation. But in Pakistan, the political alliance between religious leaders, landlords, urban students, and radical peasants did not provide a strong foundation for postindependence rule. Shortly after these groups founded the nation of Pakistan, their coalition, and the state it had established, began to unravel.

In sum, Tudor's work effectively leverages the social forces paradigm to convincingly explain the puzzling divergence of India and Pakistan's regime trajectories. The work also demonstrates the important independent role that political institutions like parties play in shaping these trajectories. But the theoretical claim in the book's introduction, that during times of economic change class ought to be privileged over other cleavages in analyses of regime change, seems too strong, particularly given the high likelihood that other cleavages may become politically resonant during moments of decolonization and the empirical evidence from the cases. Indeed, in subsequent work, Tudor herself somewhat relaxes this commitment to class as the most important cleavage for studying regime trajectories as she extends and deepens her argument about nationalism and its capacity to forge new social identities and in-

[51] The Punjabi Muslim religious leaders in Tudor's account play an analogous role to the communal leaders that Slater privileges in his analysis, providing an alternative basis for social identification that cuts across class lines.

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terests. In fact, in a coauthored chapter with Slater, the two scholars forward an argument about the importance of nationalism in sustaining democracy in India and Indonesia that privileges the coexistence and interaction of class and nonclass identities.[52] Tudor and Slater therefore seem to be largely in agreement: when analyzing social forces and regime trajectories in postcolonial contexts, class and nonclass cleavages (or, most probably, their interaction) are likely to structure political conflict and shape regime outcomes.

Family and Ethnic Politics in Africa

Boone's *Property and Political Order in Africa* is a somewhat different type of book than Tudor's and Slater's. She is less concerned with regime variation at the national level, and more interested in the structure of subnational conflict across sub-Saharan Africa. In this regard, she is much more focused on the first step in Moore's original framework: the social origins of political conflict in a given polity. The central empirical question in Boone's work is about conflict over land. In Africa, where land has been historically abundant, rapid population increases have raised levels of territorial competition resulting in a broad structural trend across the continent that has brought about myriad forms of social conflict. She argues that the type of conflict that emerges, that is, the form and level that it takes, depends on the land- tenure regime that governs a particular region. She writes, "Political variations occur because tensions fueled by rising competition for land are refracted through the different local institutional configurations that make up land tenure regimes" (p. 8). In this sense, Boone's work represents a unique type of book in the social forces tradition. Whereas most accounts since Moore's focus on the second link of the causal chain—the relationship between conflict and regime outcomes—and largely assume that class cleavages will shape that conflict, Boone makes those cleavages the primary dependent variable of her analysis. In the subsequent section, I discuss in more depth how Boone's account might serve as an important example for scholars interested in recentering social forces research on this part of the causal process. But here I discuss how her work complements Slater's and Tudor's accounts by demon-

[52] Specifically, in their discussion of the Indian case, much of which aligns with the analysis in Tudor's book, they argue that the Congress Party's inclusive version of nationalism helped to transcend potentially divisive class and nonclass cleavages, including caste and religion. At the end of the introduction the two scholars write, "Our analysis takes class cleavages seriously while recognizing that Asian colonization intentionally exacerbated identity-based cleavages through practices of divide and rule." Tudor and Slater 2016, 32.

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strating empirically how two nonclass social cleavages, family and ethnicity, have shaped regime trajectories in several African states.

Although Boone is less centrally concerned with regime outcomes than Tudor and Slater, her work does bear on questions of regime structure and durability. She orients her book around three major themes—ethnic politics, state structure, and elections—and shows how the nature of land-related social conflict in each state affects these various outcomes. For example, her section on state structure explains how certain land tenure regimes have allowed many African states to craft durable authoritarian regimes that govern indirectly through local notables empowered to make political decisions.[53] In these states, conflict frequently remains bottled up at the regional level, insulating national leaders from grassroots mobilization that could undermine their rule.

Two chapters from this section are particularly worth discussing because they demonstrate how material change and institutional structures can interact to pattern conflict in somewhat unexpected ways. The first, Chapter 6, "Land Conflict at the Micro-Scale: Family," argues that cleavages at a level as low as the family could be significant in structuring political conflict (pp. 188–99). It suggests that in social forces research scholars ought to cast widely for the relevant social groups, beyond even the obvious nonclass collectivities like ethnic and religious groups. Boone demonstrates how in the Kisii region of Kenya the extended family has become the primary arena for social conflict, with hierarchies emerging along gendered or generational lines. This region historically has seen little ethnic in-migration, and authority over land has remained with the heads of various households. As a result, competition over increasingly scarce land has taken place largely within extended families, with family members of subordinate status—women, youth, and adopted family members—generally losing out to those with closer relations to the family patriarch. This pattern explains why Kisii has seen high levels of out-migration over the past generation, as family members who have lost out in these conflicts leave in search of livelihoods elsewhere. It also explains why the Kisii region has demonstrated a highly fractionalized voting pattern in recent Kenyan elections, with deep generational splits that cut across the relative ethnic homogeneity of the re-

[53] The tendency to rule through notables, who are connected to the central government via clientelistic ties, is a key feature of what political scientists working on sub-Saharan Africa term "neopatrimonialism," which is seen as the modal form of political order in much of the continent. For more on this concept, see Clapham 1985; Sandbrook 1986, 1993; Bayart 1993; Bratton and van de Walle 1994; Chabal and Daloz 1999; Chabal and Daloz 2006; van de Walle 2001; Bach and Gazibo 2012. For a recent critique, see Mkandawire 2015.

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gion. The case undermines the common perspective that communities in Africa, particularly in rural areas, tend to vote in blocs and that politics is motivated exclusively by ethnic affiliations.

A second important chapter is Chapter 8, "Land Conflict at the National Scale: Rwanda," in which Boone explains Rwanda's highly tumultuous regime trajectory since independence as the product of land conflicts that have rapidly scaled up to the national level (pp. 229–52). She argues that the legacies of Rwanda's precolonial and colonial statist land tenure regime—that is, a land tenure regime in which disputes over land are adjudicated and resolved at the national level, rather than by local notables—explain why tensions over land in Rwanda have assumed an ethnic rather than class character and have taken place within the arena of national politics. The Rwandan state after independence maintained top-down, unmediated authority over land allocations, and sought to effect a variety of rural-to-rural migrations to manage population pressure on land and maintain the domains of those connected to the political elite. When Hutus took control of the state with the coup of 1959 and abolished the Tutsi monarchy, they expropriated land from and expelled Tutsi landlords, parceling out those plots to Hutu small farmers and tenants from other parts of the country. These migrants were subsequently beholden to state officials for their continued protection and access to land, which heightened their stakes in maintaining the political status quo. The dependency relationship also gave state officials direct levers of influence over farmers and peasants in these regions. Boone compellingly argues that these dependency dynamics are critical to explaining variations in regional patterns of violence during the genocide: "The areas of heaviest killing in the early days of the genocide were the areas that had been settled under the aegis and guiding hand of the postcolonial state" (p. 248).

In sum, all three of the works under review demonstrate that the social forces tradition can be fruitfully applied to postcolonial cases in Asia and Africa to help explain the puzzling heterogeneity of regime outcomes in these regions. Moreover, they demonstrate empirically that social forces structured along the lines of ethnicity, nation, region, religion, and family have been important drivers of political change. Though these groups often overlap with and interact with social classes, class conflict cannot on its own explain the trajectories of regimes in these regions. Societies with cross-cutting lines of difference structured along multiple dimensions have the potential to be politicized in myriad ways, and we should not assume that class identity will trump others in matters of politics.

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IV. Explaining Cleavages and Patterns of Conflict

If class is not the "master key" to analyzing political conflict across societies, then a central concern for scholarly research in the social forces tradition must be to explain the emergence of particular cleavage patterns in a society. As noted above, Boone's work differs from Slater's and Tudor's in making this question her primary concern. Why do some African states see strong ethnic cleavages? Why are some riven by peasant-landlord divisions? Why does tribalism prevail in some states? Boone sees these conflicts as different refractions of a common underlying competition over access to increasingly scarce land. Depending on the land-tenure institutions by which a given region is governed, coupled with its histories of in- and out-migration, such tensions will take on an array of different colors. In this sense, Boone revives a component of social forces analysis that was originally core to the approach, but has since become less central: explaining how deep structural changes bring about specific patterns of politically resonant social cleavages. Indeed, she explicitly states that she is following in Moore's footsteps by embracing "an analytic strategy of tracing comparative responses to broad socioeconomic shocks" (p. 7).

Boone positions this move in part as a critique of the ethnic politics literature, which often presumes that ethnic identity is driven by ideational or cultural factors. Not only do these accounts tend to overlook the material bases of ethnic conflict, but they also typically ignore the question of why ethnic cleavages emerge in the first place. She points out that despite most scholars' stated rejection of primordialism and embrace of constructivism, much of the literature still implicitly adopts a number of primordialist assumptions: for example, that ethnicity is assigned, unchanging, and exogenous of politics.[54] Indeed, most instrumentalist and rationalist theories of ethnicity subscribe to these assumptions.[55] Scholars of ethnic identity occasionally have posed the question of how particular identities emerge and become political salient. For example, Daniel Posner and David Laitin have argued that colonial institutions were central to structuring the ethnic cleavages

[54] In most cases, this is done by turning a blind eye to the constructivist process of ethnic identity formation, which is presumed to have happened sometime in the distant past. Identity may have been fluid in the past, but in the present it is presumed that we can analyze it as fixed. For a fuller critique of this conceptualization, see Brubaker and Cooper 2000.

[55] Prominent examples of instrumentalist and rationalist approaches to ethnic politics include Banton 1983; Hechter 1987; Brass 1991; Hardin 1995; Fearon and Laitin 1996; Chandra 2004; Wilkinson 2006; Posner 2004; and Posner 2005.

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that became potentially politically resonant in sub-Saharan Africa.[56] But much of this literature is susceptible to Boone's criticism that it fails to "explain *why* ethnicity per se is salient in postcolonial politics, or more salient than class, religion, region, gender, or generation" (p. 98).[57]

Another important theoretical implication of Boone's argument is that economic change need not necessarily heighten the resonance of class boundaries or sharpen interests defined along class lines. Rather, depending on the type of institutions through which this change is refracted, conflicts may emerge between groups based on ascriptive identities like tribe and ethnicity. This finding suggests that earlier generations of social forces scholars may have been wrong to assume that socioeconomic tensions would manifest themselves inevitably in class-based antagonisms. In fact, Boone explains that her study was motivated in part by "Africa's bad fit with models of rural class structure that are familiar from the study of Europe and the New World" (p. 61). In Africa, land is less systematically structured along the lines of vertical landlord-peasant ties, and the systems that govern it have not evolved in the ways predicted by new institutional economic theory, that is, from customary regimes to systems based on private property.[58] Rather neocustomary regimes have endured throughout the continent, and the social tensions emerging from the decreasing abundance of land have been managed by ethnic notables or chiefs empowered by the state. The material pressures of rising land scarcity have therefore generated heightened ethnic cleavages and produced ethnic competition. Note here the subtle difference between Boone's argument and Slater's critique of the material assumptions underlying most social forces work. Slater argues that material change is not the only important driver of conflict; structural transformations like decolonization may also produce explosive political struggles. But Boone proposes that even when rapid socioeconomic change occurs, as it has with rising competition for land in Africa, it need not necessarily heighten class cleavages. In other

[56] Laitin 1986; Posner 2005. See also Reno 1999 and Lieberman and Singh 2012 for discussions of the institutional and material origins of ethnic cleavages.

[57] Similar criticisms have emerged from within the ethnic politics scholarship. For example, in a review article of scholarship on race in American politics, Taeku Lee (2008) argues that many studies of race and ethnicity are marked by an inherent structural determinism, assuming that political conflict will be driven by ethnic groups. He proposes that scholars pay more attention to what he calls the "identity-to-politics link," or the process by which identity is created and made politically resonant. Brubaker 2002 similarly calls for scholars to pay more attention to processes of ethnic group formation, or "groupness."

[58] North and Thomas 1976; North 1981; Barzel 1997; Alston, Libecap, and Mueller 1999; Menard and Shirley 2008.

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words, political conflict between nonclass social forces may emerge from *both* material and nonmaterial structural change.

Boone's work offers a helpful reminder that social forces scholarship ought to be at least as attentive to explaining the patterns of conflict that emerge in a given society as it is to tracing the consequences of that conflict on regime trajectories. It suggests that scholars might begin by exploring patterns of social identity in the periods immediately preceding major political transformations as a first step to understanding the social conflicts that shaped these transitions.[59] This is not to say that all scholars writing in the tradition ought to fully reposition their work around explaining cleavage patterns. But it does suggest that scholars should not take for granted and make a priori assumptions about which identities will shape political conflict in a given case. The decision to focus on one group over another in a work on regime change ought to be a considered one, and should be defended both theoretically and empirically. Boone's discussion of sometimes overlooked social cleavages, such as generation and gender within families, also suggests that scholars should remain open-minded in their analyses and allow their assumptions about which groups will matter most to be challenged by the evidence they uncover.

V. Conclusions

This review has proposed that the social forces paradigm can effectively travel to postcolonial cases in Asia and Africa, but that its utility for analyzing these cases may require some pluralization. Undoubtedly, class analysis will remain central to the paradigm; many cases can and should continue to be analyzed by studying the contests between different social classes. But class conflict is not the only form of political struggle that shapes regime trajectories. To the extent that new political institutions and regime structures affect the distribution of power across all manner of groups in society, we should anticipate that multiple cleavages will be activated during the highly charged moments of regime formation and transformation.[60] Scholars wishing to extend and apply

[59] In another article Slater, with Erica Simmons, makes a suggestion along these lines, proposing that scholars pay attention to the "antecedent conditions" that precede critical junctures. See Slater and Simmons 2010.

[60] Relatedly, Scott Mainwaring and Aníbal Pérez-Liñán have argued that conflicts over democracy are often over more than economic issues. Democratization affects many different types of groups, often in historically specific ways that cannot be reducible to concerns over redistribution. Mainwairing and Pérez-Liñán 2014.

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the social forces tradition may therefore want to study how groups defined by ascriptive identities, in addition to those structured on socioeconomic lines, are affected by and seek to shape regime change.

Modified in this way, the social forces paradigm may come to be a fruitful lens for studying regions where it would seem to be poorly suited, but where puzzling variation in regime trajectories continues to confound us. A good example is the Middle East, a region in which class groups are often understood to be nebulous and in which supposedly primordial identities, such as sect, language, and religion, are understood to be paramount. As a result, there are few works that seek to explain regime outcomes in this region using a social forces lens.[61] For several decades the prevailing question about regimes in the Middle East was why authoritarianism seemed to be so stubbornly persistent. The answers offered tended to center not on conflict or compromise between social forces, but around dependence on oil or effective authoritarian institutions.[62] But the Arab Spring revolutions of 2011 shook these apparently durable regimes to their roots and at the same time raised a host of new empirical and theoretical questions about regime change that have yet to be answered. Indeed, one of the most striking puzzles about the Arab Spring has been the variation in regime trajectories from the common starting point of revolutionary mobilization: Tunisia alone has progressed haltingly toward democracy; Egypt's revolutionary regime was overthrown by a counterrevolution; Syria, Yemen, and Libya have collapsed into civil war; and Bahrain, Jordan, and Morocco managed to thwart nascent revolutionary movements through repression and cooptation.[63] And in many cases the conflicts that have shaped these trajectories have been waged between groups defined along nonclass lines: between Islamists and secularists; Christians, Sunnis, and Shias; Kurds and Arabs; or tribe- and clan-based groups.[64] A pluralized version of the social forces approach, in a manner that resembles the works reviewed here, might therefore be a powerful method for making sense of the Arab Spring's diverse outcomes.

The Middle East is, of course, not the only region of the global South with puzzling regime variation or episodes of regime change that defy theoretical predictions. In much of the postcolonial world, democracy

[61] Bellin 2002 and Anderson 1986 stand out as exceptions, though both embrace class analysis.

[62] For an overview of the debates on authoritarian durability in the Middle East, see Posusney and Angrist 2005.

[63] Bellin 2012; Brownlee, Masoud, and Reynolds 2015.

[64] On the different social groups that participated in the Arab Spring uprisings, see Kandil 2012; Leenders and Heydemann 2012; Clarke 2014; Beissinger, Jamal, and Mazur 2015; and Lust and Waldner 2016.

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has emerged and persisted "against the odds," as Bermeo and Yashar put it, that is, in the face of theoretical expectations that poor countries are unlikely to build and sustain democracies.[65] And many of these recent Southern transitions to democracy have been brought about through popular revolutionary mobilization.[66] Indeed, the Arab Spring revolutions have, along with other recent revolutionary waves, put paid to the once widely accepted notion that "the age of revolutions" is over.[67] In fact, as Mark Beissinger argues, the occurrence of revolutions has actually increased in frequency since the Cold War.[68] Revolution is a mode of regime change that explicitly involves the mobilization of social forces seeking to overthrow an incumbent regime using popular protest.[69] It is therefore a particularly suitable mode of regime change to examine through a social forces lens. But as in the Middle East, the social forces at the center of these recent Southern revolutions are often not classes, but groups defined along the lines of religion, ethnicity, language, region, or nation. To effectively make sense of these increasingly frequent revolutionary episodes, the social forces paradigm may therefore have to be retooled in the manner laid out above.

Skeptics may argue that abandoning the class lens will sap the social forces tradition of its theoretical clarity and analytical purchase. It may be difficult to effectively untangle the web of identities and interests that define different groups or coalitions, and inferring preferences may become more challenging. It also potentially introduces into analyses collective actors that have not conventionally entered into the dramas of political change. But complexity can also be an advantage; it certainly better captures the rich variation in empirical patterns of social conflict over time and space that we observe in the postcolonial world.

[65] Bermeo and Yashar 2016, 4–9.

[66] According to data collected by Barbara Geddes, Joseph Wright, and Erica Frantz (2014), popular uprisings have become an increasingly common mode of democratization in the past thirty years; since 1987 approximately 30 percent of democratic transitions were brought about through popular uprisings or revolutionary civil wars versus 20 percent for the period from 1946 to 1987. Similarly, Teorell 2010 identifies a statistically significant relationship between nonviolent popular mobilization and democratization in the third-wave democratic transitions from 1972 to 2006. For analyses of specific cases of democratization through popular mobilization during this period, see Bratton and van de Walle 1997, Wood 2000, and LeBas 2013.

[67] Foran 2003.

[68] Beissinger 2016.

[69] Of course, as the Arab Spring has demonstrated, democratization is far from the only possible regime outcome following revolution. In many recent revolutionary waves, authoritarian or hybrid regimes were as likely to emerge as democratic ones. For example, like the Arab Spring revolutionary wave, the anticommunist revolutions of the late 1980s and early 1990s, the "people power" movements of the same period, and the color revolutions of the 2000s left a variety of regime forms in their wakes. On diverse regime outcomes following the people power movements, see Schock 2005. On regime outcomes following the color revolutions, see Hale 2005; Kalandadze and Orenstein 2009; and Kennedy 2014.

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Indeed, I would contend that a social forces approach unbound from its class moorings will be a more flexible and powerful paradigm for studying political regimes.

This is not to say that a revised version of the paradigm may not require some changes in research strategies. Considering a wider array of potential actors will likely require careful empirical detective work and inductive analysis of the cases under consideration. Scholars may therefore want to take what Giovanni Capoccia and Daniel Ziblatt have called an "episode-centric" approach to research.[70] Such an approach privileges analysis of critical junctures in which contingent decisions taken by key actors can produce long-run institutional trajectories.[71] By homing in on these junctures, scholars may be able to better identify the full array of actors (both class and nonclass) relevant to a particular moment of change. In so doing, they might proceed in two steps. First, they may study the historical conditions antecedent to the critical juncture that have made certain identities politically resonant.[72] This type of analysis might look something like Boone's book, examining how social change (both material and nonmaterial), when refracted through particular historical institutions, makes certain cleavages more resonant than others. Of course, as noted above, it is a tall order to expect scholars to conduct an equally rigorous examination of both antecedent conditions and the critical juncture itself—in other words, to spend the same time and effort on each of Moore's two steps. A more cursory analysis of the antecedent period may, therefore, be appropriate. But to ignore the antecedent period entirely means potentially incorrectly inferring which social cleavages will be relevant in the crucial moment of regime change. Second, scholars should examine how certain identities and interests are mobilized by political entrepreneurs during the period of the critical juncture itself. As constructivist and agency-centric theorists have argued, the structural constraints imposed by history can in fact be overcome by concerted political will and effective leadership. A good example is the Congress Party in India, which, as Tudor shows, sought to downplay the political importance of identities based on caste and region during the independence period. In other words, not all cleavages that are potentially resonant in a given historical moment will necessarily be the main drivers of politics; they may be transcended and depoliticized by effective political entrepreneurs.

In sum, an episode-centric approach to social forces research would

[70] Capoccia and Ziblatt 2010.
[71] Keleman and Capoccia 2007; Soifer 2012.
[72] Slater and Simmons 2010.

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not only analyze the cleavages made resonant by historical structural transformations, but would also examine the efforts of political entrepreneurs to mobilize and, possibly, transcend those cleavages during moments of regime change. Of course, the challenge to such research is to account for the inevitable complexities of individual cases while developing parsimonious arguments capable of explaining other cases. Moore's masterful ability to strike this balance is part of what makes his work so enduringly powerful. The three works under consideration in this article are also exemplary in this regard, demonstrating that such a balance can be achieved even when incorporating nonclass groups. Indeed, what the works by Slater, Tudor, and Boone ultimately suggest is that complexity need not prevent scholars from generating rich and nuanced theories that help us to make sense of puzzling patterns of regime change in the postcolonial world.

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